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Specific Comments on
Soviet Agriculture

Draft Paper on

Part I

Chapter 1, page 4, para. 7, line 3.

a. In addition to the source which gave the quoted prewar figure of 5.7 million hectares of "drained land", another source gave a postwar figure. Sotsialisticheskoye Zemledeliye, 23 September 1952, stated: "Up to the revolution, about 2,500,000 hectares of swampy lands had been drained in Russia (including Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia). By 1950, this figure had risen to almost 6 million hectares."

Chapter 2, page 1, para. 3, line 16.

a. Grain exports fell to 1.7 million tons in 1933 (rather than 1953), and remained below this level until the war.

Chapter 2, page 2, para. 5, line 6.

a. In 1913 out of the total sown area of 105.0 million hectares, breadgrains (wheat and rye) comprised 57.5 million hectares, and total grains 94.4 million hectares. Thus, total grains (rather than breadgrains alone) comprised 90 percent of the total sown area.

Chapter 2, page 2, para. 6(c), line 6.

a. Suggest stating that the cultivation of cotton on unirrigated land in south Russia and the Ukraine has been sharply curtailed, rather than a categorical statement that it has been completely abandoned.

Chapter 2, page 9, para. 23.

a. The meaning in the next to the last sentence is not clear. The reader is left with somewhat of the feeling that if "the superior efficiency of U.S. agriculture is not expressed by the higher output per head of American farm labor (5:1)", then what would be a better expression.

Part II

Page 11, para. 30.

a. Line 5 - typographical error - should be "28-30 million hectares."

b. Line 11 - It is interesting to note that all achievements in the expansion of area in the new lands in 1955 are related to the original plan of 13 million hectares despite the fact that in a decree published on 17 August 1954, this 1955 plan was revised upward to 15 million hectares. The use of the original, lower plan figure makes for a better base in expressing achievement.

Page 15, para. 32.

a. Line 6 - Should be 10 milliard (not million) poods.

Note. Paper on which comments were made filed in M/AG Branch.

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Page 2

Page 15, para. 40.

a. This is a good, logical explanation of some of the "paper" reasoning that might have gone into planning a "barn" production of 164 million tons of grain by 1960.

b. It seems entirely possible that a statistical manipulation of maize production expressed in some form of grain "equivalent" may be just the gimmick the Soviets need to replace the now defunct "biological" production, thus once again permitting publication of grain production figures in a "favorable" light.

Part III

Page 1, para. 1, line 9.

a. A gap of 20 million tons between a fairly good year and a fairly poor year seems rather large. The spread between 1952, a good year, and 1953, a relatively poor year was probably in the order of magnitude of 10 million tons. It is very true, of course, that with an expanded acreage in marginal or submarginal lands, the year to year fluctuations in total production may be much greater.

Page 1, para. 2, line 8.

a. The quoted 30 percent increase in milk production was for an eight month period (rather than seven) from 1 October 1954 to 1 June 1955. This percentage increase in milk production is the result of a small absolute increase during a period of time when perhaps no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total output is produced. (Khrushchev in a speech published in Pravda, 19 May 1955, stated that "the gross milk output in the past seven months -- that is, 1 October 1954 to 1 May 1955 -- increased by 840,000 tons, or by 29 percent, as compared with the same period of 1953-54. It increased by 1,424,000 tons, or by 60 percent, against 1952-53." Thus the gross milk output for the seven month period in 1953-54 was 2.9 million tons and for the same length period in 1952-53 was approximately 2.4 million tons. These amounts are roughly 10 percent of the estimated total annual production.) Thus, for both the 30 percent and the 55 percent figures quoted by Khrushchev, it is not safe to assume that these percentage increases would apply for total annual milk production (as is implied also in paragraph 12 of Part III).

Page 2, para. 3, sentences 4 and 5.

a. Again there is a question of possible overemphasis re the successes in milk production. Also, is there a conflict between the statement "the peasants did work only too well", and the first sentence of paragraph 4 - "the peasants have not been working as hard as they might"?

Page 4, para. 11(a).

a. The yield should be 0.967 tons per hectare (rather than 9.87).

Page 5, para. 14.

a. Total grain yield of 120 million tons (not hectares).

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